TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AUSTIN TEXAS
INTER-OFFICE

TO: Regional Directors
Directors, Local Health Departments
Directors, Independent WIC Local Agencies

FROM: Barbara Keir, Director **"ORIGINAL SIGNED"**
Public Health Nutrition and Education
Bureau of Nutrition Services

DATE: August 10, 2001

SUBJECT: Distributing Information from Newborn Screening

All infants born in Texas are mandated by law to be screened for 5 disorders - congenital adrenal hyperplasia, galactosemia, congenital hypothyroidism, phenylketonuria, and sickle cell anemia. If these disorders are not treated early in life they can cause mental retardation, severe illness, or death.

All newborns are screened for these 5 disorders before hospital discharge, and their parents must take them to their doctor sometime between 1-2 weeks of age for the second screen.

The Newborn Screening Program, which is administered by the Texas Department of Health (TDH), has requested the assistance of local WIC staff in reminding all new moms about the importance of getting the second screen in a timely manner. Because most infants born to WIC moms are enrolled within the first week of life, we are asking you to please remind the moms of this very important screen and encourage them to set up an appointment with their infant's doctor, if they have not already done so. The Newborn Screening Program has a new poster in English and Spanish (front and back) that can be displayed at your WIC clinics. They also have brochures and reminder cards, which can be ordered and given to the new moms. You may order any of these materials by calling 1-800-422-2956 or by ordering online at:

http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/newborn/pubs.htm.

Please note that this is not mandated by WIC policy, and you will not be monitored for compliance, but we highly encourage your assistance with this very important reminder. Some moms may have questions about the five disorders. So that you will be familiar with them, we are including a brief description of each one. If you have questions, please call Mimi Kaufman, Children with Special Health Care Needs Nutrition Consultant, at (512) 458-7111 extension 3495.

FACT SHEET

The Newborn Screening Program identifies infants with certain genetic disorders. Finding these infants and giving them early treatment may prevent serious complications, such as mental retardation or even death. Currently the Newborn Screening Program tests infants for five types of birth defects. All infants born in Texas are mandated by state law to be screened for these five genetic disorders, phenylketonuria (PKU), galactosemia, congenital hypothyroidism, sickle cell anemia and congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH). Each infant needs to be screened twice, once before hospital discharge and again at seven to fourteen days of age.

Congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH)
(kon-JEN-i-tal a-DRE-nal hi-per-PLA-ze-a)
Due to a genetic defect, certain hormones, primarily cortisol, cannot be made by the body. Infants may develop vomiting, poor weight gain and severe dehydration, which may be life threatening. Left untreated, CAH may result in death. About 1 in 10,000 newborns in Texas have CAH.

Galactosemia
(ga-LAK-to-se-mi-a)
Due to an enzyme deficiency, an infant with galactosemia cannot metabolize the milk sugar, galactose. Detected early, life threatening complications may be prevented by providing a diet low in galactose. Galactosemia occurs in about 1 in 64,500 Texas newborns.

Congenital hypothyrodism
(kon-JEN-I-tal HI-po-THI-royd-izm)
Congenital hypothyroidism is most often due to failure of the thyroid gland to develop correctly. The thyroid gland is responsible for secreting the hormone thyroxine (T4), which plays an important role in growth and development. An absence of thyroxine can lead to abnormal growth and development, as well as slow mental development. Hypothyroidism is treated with thyroxin tablets. 1 in every 3,200 Texas newborns is affected.

Phenylketonuria (PKU)
(FEN-il-KE-to-nu-re-a)
Infants with PKU cannot break down the amino acid phenylalanine due to a genetic defect. Brain damage may be prevented by a special diet low in phenylalanine. PKU occurs in about 135,200 Texas newborns.

Sickle cell anemia
(SIK-el sel a-NE-me-a)
Sickle cell anemia is a hereditary disorder that affects hemoglobin, the substance in red blood cells that carries oxygen. The sickle shaped red blood cells may block tiny blood vessels and cause severe pain. Sickle cell anemia is associated with frequent infections and interferes with proper functioning of certain organs (liver, kidney, brain). 1 out of every 350 African American Texas newborns is affected, however, sickle cell anemia can occur in other races.